

CONVOY[®]

A Programmed *CAR WARS* Adventure
for 1-6 players



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

**LEXINGTON to MEMPHIS.
400 MILES. THIRTEEN HOURS.**

**If you make it, you'll earn
a quick \$100,000.**

If you fail, a city dies.

CONVOY

**A CAR WARS adventure
for 1 to 6 players.
Or you can go it alone . . .
if you feel brave enough.**



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7401

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A CAR WARS

Programmed Adventure

by Steve Jackson and David Ladyman

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INTRODUCTION

Convoy is a programmed *Car Wars* adventure. It can be played by two to six players in a group — or one person can play solitaire. Either way, you will create and play six characters. One player can control them all, or two players can control three each, or whatever you like. Although no referee is required for regular play, *Convoy* can also be used as a refereed adventure for tournament play. The referee reads the book, gives players their options, and reads the result; he also plays the opponents in combat situations. If this is done, it is suggested that the referee change a few of the encounters in case some players have already seen the adventure.

To play, you will need pencil, paper, two dice, and the *Car Wars* rules. The *Truck Stop* set is very useful, but not necessary. All other *Car Wars* supplementary material is legal (exception: you can't use helicopters), but no supplements other than *Truck Stop* will give you any particular advantage.

HOW TO PLAY A PROGRAMMED ADVENTURE

Begin by reading this section for the scenario rules and the instructions to create your characters and build your vehicles. When you are finished, turn to paragraph 1 (page 11) to begin the adventure.

As you play, each paragraph will give you information and options. The choice you make will determine which paragraph you turn to. For instance, you might read: "You can drive straight ahead (60), turn left (234), or turn around and go back (18)." You must choose *one* option. If you choose to go straight ahead, turn to paragraph 60 to see what you find next. Do *not* read any paragraph other than the one that you choose, and do *not* just flip through the book reading . . . you will spoil your fun.

Because of the variety of choices and encounters, you will be able to play through *Convoy* several times before you learn the road. Once you know the way, you can pick your fights to your best advantage. Once you're really familiar with the adventure, you can change it around and referee it for your friends — see Design Notes, page 62.

This is possible because of the "checkpoint" system used to write the paragraphs. Each town or city is assigned a numbered paragraph. "Checkpoints" ten miles apart are established along all roads, and each of these checkpoints also has its own paragraph. Thus, players can turn around and go the other direction at any checkpoint . . . and referees can add a new encounter at any checkpoint!

A really creative referee could scrap *all* the road encounters given in *Convoy* and use the checkpoints and the background information to build a wholly new adventure along the same highways. After all, next week the Green Grabber and the paint-spray operators will be somewhere else . . . but the Beaver Dam police will be right there, and the Cyclones will be *somewhere* around. That way, players who had already run *Convoy* would have the fair advantage of "knowing the country" — but not the unfair advantage of knowing exactly who and what was around every bend!

Creating Characters

Convoy is designed for six *Car Wars* characters (which, of course, can be played by anywhere from one to six players). Each character should have advanced about three skill levels

since he took up auto-duelling — that is, he is (on the average) Level 1 in three different areas, Level 2 in 2 areas, or the equivalent. A set of six sample characters is provided below.



The team's mission is to drive a tanker from Lexington to Memphis. They will have to provide their own escort vehicles; these are assumed to be their personal property. There may be up to 5 escort vehicles, but their combined value may not exceed \$80,000. (If you use characters from a continuing campaign, and their vehicles are worth less than \$70,000, then ConTexCo will provide some expense money to install computers, etc., before the run.) The group has \$1000 for expenses.

Sample Characters

This is a sample crew for the mission — 6 skill levels each (remember, the first level is 0), with a good mixture of skills. Feel free to design your own team, or use existing characters if they're not a lot more experienced than this group. If you don't have *Truck Stop*, of course, nobody will have the Trucker or Mechanic talents, and designing your crew will be a lot easier.

Leader: Carl Kirk. "Captain" to his friends. Driver-2, Gunner-2.

Truck driver: Templeton Smythe III. "Temp" to anyone who doesn't want to get hit (he is six feet five and built like a bear). Trucker-2, Gunner-1, Driver-0.

Mechanic: Pete Townes. Mech-3, Driver-1. Nearsighted and jumpy, but a wizard with tools. (Let him ride as second gunner on the truck, and put him in charge of laying smoke and oil. It's hard to miss with smoke and oil.)

Second-in-command: Andrea "Andy" Fowler. Driver-1, Trucker-1, Mech-1. A jack-of-all-trades.

Gunner: Walt Hotchkiss. Gunner-2, Mech-1, Driver-0.

Lead driver: Casey Catt. Driver-2, Mech-1, Gunner-0.

This team provides a good balance of skills, including one hotshot mechanic and one backup truck driver. Pick your crew carefully. Remember that if everyone is a specialist, just one loss could doom the mission.

Combat

Combat will almost certainly be necessary at some point in the adventure. When a combat situation occurs (that is, when you attack a vehicle or pedestrian, or when someone fires at you), set up the *Car Wars* road sections and play the combat out. Some enemies will battle to the death; others may flee, surrender, etc. The paragraph you are reading will give you specific instructions for each combat.

Be sure to keep track of the ammunition you expend. If a weapon runs out of ammunition, it may not fire again until you can salvage or buy more ammo.

BACKGROUND

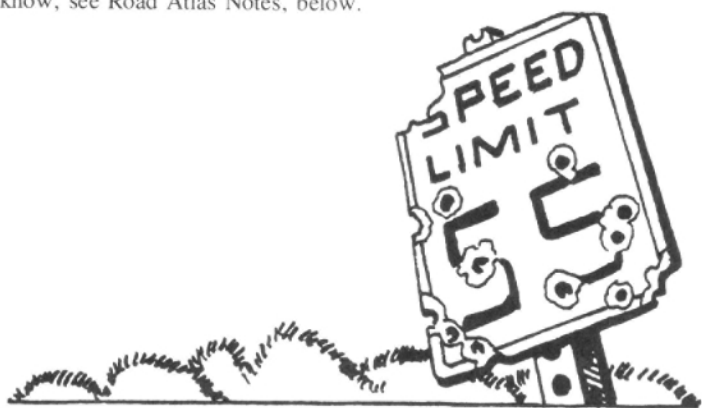
A mutant bacterium has contaminated an algae farm in Memphis, ruining a major source of Memphis' food supply. Memphis has only about two days' worth of food in the stores . . . barely enough time to cultivate a new brew of algae. Your team has been hired to deliver a tanker full of disease-resistant algae to Memphis . . . before 9 a.m. tomorrow!

For reasons having to do with company politics (and their own suspicions about the source of the contamination), the algaculture company, ConTexCo, cannot supply its own personnel and escort vehicles. They will, of course, supply the tanker, fully equipped and charged, but it has no markings identifying it as a ConTexCo vehicle. You sense that they want to keep the Memphis problem a secret if they can.

Your team will be paid \$100,000 for timely completion of the mission; you have 13 hours to travel just over 400 miles. If you bring the tanker in late, you will be docked \$5,000 for each hour or partial hour. However, coming in early will not earn a bonus; ConTexCo does not want to encourage reckless driving! If the tanker and cab arrive without significant damage (less than 10 points damage to any side, and no wheels gone), each survivor will get a \$3,000 bonus. It is also understood (as always, on the open road) that anything you can pick up is yours to keep.

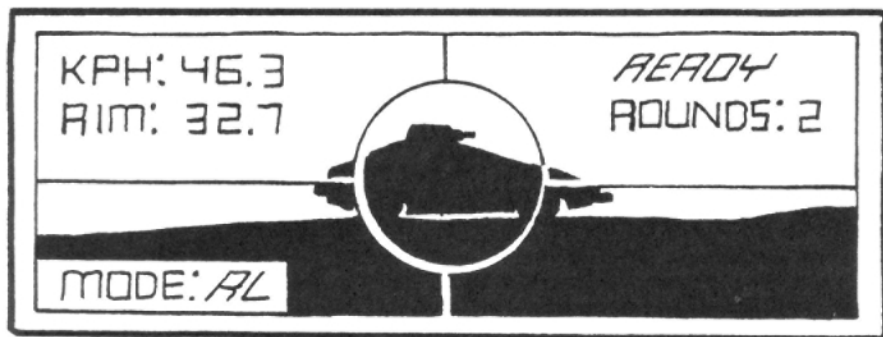
You should not consider pirating the tanker. Its contents will die and decay in 24 hours if not removed; none of you know where to sell it; the truckers' Brotherhood has rigidly-enforced prohibitions against the sale or use of hijacked rigs; and you strongly suspect that, like many valuable cargoes, the rig is booby-trapped anyway! Though this last factor may discourage some bandits from attacking you, you may expect that others won't know, won't care, or will shoot at you just to see the explosions.

Your adventure begins at a truck stop south of Lexington, Kentucky. Like most truck stops, this is a fortified "safe area" where you can buy food, drinks, simple repairs, ammo, etc. You and your vehicles are safe within the walls. Your team was recruited some 300 miles away, for security reasons; you drove here in broad daylight, along fairly good roads, and had no problems along the way . . . but the territory from here to Memphis is new to you. For information on what you *do* know, see Road Atlas Notes, below.



Road Atlas Notes

You have been given a map, along with a recommended route: Lexington to Elizabethtown to Nashville to Memphis. According to your *AADA Road Atlas and Survival Guide*, that route is mostly old interstate and tollways. Your southbound route will be two- or three-lane highway, separated from the northbound road by a 50-foot, overgrown median. (You can assume three lanes in each direction unless you are told otherwise.) There are dense trees and lots of kudzu on both sides of the road most of the time. Often, you will not even see lights from oncoming traffic, and you will not be able to cross over except at towns and exit ramps.



The map also shows several secondary roads. According to your Road Atlas, these are hazardous and untrustworthy.

As far as the towns on the map are concerned, the Road Atlas gives you the following pertinent information:

Nashville is a dead city, but there is a truck stop on the outskirts of town.

West Fulton has very strict law enforcement. So does Beaver Dam.

Bowling Green does not permit duelling within city limits.

Alamo (shown on the ConTexCo map) is not shown at all on the AADA Road Atlas map.

Union City is not listed as having a truck stop in the Road Atlas.

Memphis (your destination) is a Fortress Town, with no duelling allowed within city limits. Memphis police protection extends 20 miles north along each of the highways leading to the city.

As professional duellists and drivers, you also have a good deal of background knowledge about good driving manners . . .

There is not really a lot of combat on the highways. Most of the crazies get killed quickly. However, anybody who uses weapons and survives is probably professional about it, and therefore dangerous! It is always bad manners to point a weapon at someone to "cover" them. It may not always provoke a fight, if the insulted party is sensible or badly outgunned, but it is dangerous.

It is good manners to get over to the far right if faster traffic comes up from behind. It is bad manners to tail somebody at less than a quarter-mile or so, unless you're trying to pass and they won't let you.

How to Lose

You lose automatically if all your characters are killed, if the tractor or the trailer is wrecked, or if the trailer is punctured (unless you find a way to salvage the contents). You also lose if someone gets the trailer away from you, intact. In most cases, there will be no special instructions for these contingencies — i.e., if the trailer gets wrecked halfway to Memphis, there is no provision for playing out the game and trying to get back home alive. You can assume that the characters who survived this far will land on their feet and get back home — but they don't get any reward. They get experience, but no prestige.

How to Win

You win by delivering the tanker, intact, to the ConTexCo people in Memphis. The better shape you and your vehicles are in, the greater your victory. Your characters will score normal experience for all kills made; they will also accrue prestige as though they had been in an arena, plus an extra 3 prestige points apiece, for saving Memphis from a nasty famine.



1 Your time starts now; it is 8 p.m. You have 13 hours to get to Memphis. You are in the cafe at the Lexington truck stop. Around you are truckers, drivers, and even, off in one corner, a couple of tough-looking bikers. You can hit the road immediately (311). You can spend some time mingling with the other patrons at the cafe to see if you can learn anything about the route ahead of you (74). Or you can take a few minutes to check over the rig and make sure it is in top running condition (51).

2 You are 30 miles southwest of Lexington on the Bluegrass Parkway. If you are going southwest and have not passed this spot before, go to 241. If you are going northeast, or if you have passed here already, go to 39.

3 You are 20 miles northeast of Elizabethtown on the Bluegrass Parkway. If you are going northeast, or if you have passed this spot once already, go to 41. If you are going southwest and have not been by here before, go to 106.

4 You are at the Elizabethtown truck stop. You can charge power plants here, if you like. However, if you need a radio repair, you're out of luck — they don't have parts. The cashier tells you to be careful if you're heading southwest — there's a big storm brewing in that direction. You can hit the road again (313) or stay around for a while and see what you can find out (42).

5 You are 20 miles west of Lexington on I-64. You may go west (107) or east (230).

6 He has nowhere to go; if you chase him, you will catch him. Mark off an extra two minutes for time spent in combat, and for going out of your way. If you want to stop for salvage, go to 79. Otherwise, you may now go west toward Louisville (350), or east toward Lexington (5).

7 You are 20 miles east of Louisville on I-64. You can go west (136) or east (350).

8 You stop the vehicles and pile out, guns at the ready. You find no attackers, no mines, no grenades — just a couple of beer cans. As you pile back into the cars, you hear mocking laughter from overhead — but you have already wasted five minutes, and you don't want to spend more time dealing with a gang of stupid kids. You can go southwest (369) or northeast (80).

9 If you have already encountered this toll point once, go directly to 263. Otherwise, keep reading.

“Hello, toll point,” you reply. “Who’s running this show, and what’s the toll?” The answer comes back, “Well, my name’s Arnie, and my boys and I keep the roads clear around here — as long as folks pay their toll. We charge a hundred bucks per vehicle. Just ease on up to the barricade and have your money ready.” You crest a hill and see a pair of pickups parked, one on either side of the road. The road itself has been blocked by mines and several large logs. Beyond the shoulder, you see occasional movement — there are men in the ditches, watching you. You can slow to a stop and pay \$100 per vehicle (390), or start some hostile action (191).

10 You stay another 15 minutes. As you are getting ready to leave, the door opens and three men come in — a courier crew. “Looks like they’re going to have some weather down south,” they say. They just came in from Beaver Dam; they saw the end of one road duel, but nothing else of interest. Go to 352.

11 If the car burned, you get nothing. Otherwise, you find eight grenades, \$212 in cash, and what looks like a once-secret, locked compartment. Mark off 15 minutes plus

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